iQue Player

The **iQue Player** (/ˌaɪ ˈkjuː/, stylised as **iQue** *PLAYER*[2]) is a video game console that was manufactured by iQue, a joint venture between Nintendo and Chinese-American scientist Wei Yen. The system's Chinese name was *Shén Yóu Ji* (神游机), literally "Divine Gaming Machine". *Shényóu* (神游) serves a double entendre because the term also means "to make a mental journey". Although the console was never released in any English speaking countries, the name "iQue Player" appears in the console's instruction manual. The console itself takes the form of the controller and plugs directly into the television. A box accessory is available that allows multiplayer gaming.[3] It was only marketed in mainland China, as the console's unusual game distribution method is an attempt to curb game piracy in that region.

Games for the iQue Player are stored on a 64 MB flash card which is contained within a cartridge that plugs directly into the controller/console. Games were purchased at a special "iQue depot", where games may be downloaded onto the cartridge and played later, in a similar manner to the Famicom Disk System, Satellaview, Nintendo 64DD and Nintendo DS Download Play. Games can also be downloaded, by connecting the iQue to a PC. Demo games that come with the iQue include *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time*, *Super Mario 64*, and *Star Fox 64*. These demos are time-limited versions of the games. Full versions of the three titles are available, as are other first party Nintendo titles such as *Dr. Mario 64*, *Mario Kart 64*, *Wave Race 64*, and *F-Zero X*.

iQue Player	
iQue Player controller	
Developer	Nintendo
Manufacturer	iQue
Type	Home video game console
Generation	Fifth generation
Release date	CHN: November 17, 2003
Introductory price	¥498
Media	Flash card, cartridge
CPU	R-4300 64Bit CPU, 93.75 MHz
Memory	4 MB
Graphics	62.5 MHz Reality Co-Processor
Sound	ADPCM 64
Connectivity	USB (Fugue Online)
Power	AC Adapter
Online services	iQue Depot, Fugue Online[1]
Best-selling game	*Dr. Mario 64* (pre-installed in bundled memory card)
Related articles	Nintendo 64

Contents

Technical details

The iQue Player is based on the Nintendo 64, but uses system-on-a-chip technology to reduce size. It plays Nintendo 64 games specifically ported to the system.

- Processor: R-4300 64-bit CPU, 140.625 MHz
- Memory: 16 MB DDR (8 MB available)
- Graphics: 100,000 polygons/second, 2.09 million colors
- Sound: ADPCM 64

Main menu

Once the player has turned on the system, the iQue logo will appear. Then, an advertisement for a game will appear and it will say to press the A button to continue. The main menu lists the games on the memory card and info on the games as well. Once the player has selected a game, a message will appear asking if they want to play this game. A loading screen may appear. If the player presses Z on the highlighted game, a description of the game will appear. Like many other consoles, the player can change the system settings such as TV resolution and username. The system settings will also appear when the player first uses the system.

Online services

The iQue Player has online services for buying games, cloud storage, game updates, etc. Currently, there is only one online service for the iQue Player, which is broadband based. In the past, some gas stations had a kiosk based serive for accessing games.

iQue Depot

The iQue depot is a network of kiosks that allows users to download games, update games, and more. Each game comes with a game code that can be used so the user can download the game. Players can also store their games on the iQue Depot network for free. Users must be a member of the iQue Club and have a special iQue Ticket to download games.

Fugue Online

Fugue Online is an online service that allows users to get free access to games at home, update their system and more. To connect to Fugue Online, players must plug the iQue Player to their computer via USB. Games are downloaded on the computer, in a similar manner to an MP3 player. The user will need an "iQue Ticket", which is similar to a gift card and is used to purchase games. Fugue Online is only compatible with iQue Players that have been upgraded to the latest firmware. The drivers for the iQue Player only support Windows XP, and cannot run on newer operating systems.[1]

Accessories

Memory card

The iQue Player memory card is bundled with the system. It is required to start the system and to load the games. Both the games and the game save states are saved on the memory card.

Swim Box

The iQue Player Swim Box (共游盒) is a [multitap](), and is required to play local multiplayer. The Swim Box has four ports; one for the main iQue Player system, and three for Swim Controllers. Due to this design, only one iQue Player system can be used, and the other players must use Swim Controllers. When using the Swim Box, the iQue Player system is Player 1.

Swim Controller

The Swim Controller (共游机) is used for local multiplayer. The Swim Controller connects to the Swim Box, and can't load games alone. Games have to be loaded on the iQue system.

History

Development

China has an overwhelming black market for video games and usually only a few games officially make it to the Chinese market. Many Chinese gamers tend to purchase [pirated]() cartridge or disc copies or download [ROMs]() and [ISOs]() to play via [emulator](). Nintendo wanted to curb the software piracy in China, and also by-pass the then-ban that the Chinese government implemented on home game consoles since 2000. Nintendo partnered with [Wei Yen](), who helped Nintendo in other projects, and together they created a game system to get around China's black market, as well as [loophole]() through the government's ban. Originally, the system would support games released on Nintendo consoles prior to the [GameCube](), which include the [NES](), [Super NES]() and Nintendo 64, but later in the system's development, it was resulted to only include Nintendo 64 games. Additionally, *The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask* was going to be included in the software library but it was later cancelled; however, the game's promotional picture is still on the back of the box.[4]

Release

The iQue Player was released on November 17, 2003 with a few launch titles. Nintendo's strategy to market games in China was to show how video games can help improve children's mental and social development. However, the launch was not successful. The total estimated sales was between 8,000 and 12,000 units.[5] At first, the only way to get games was to buy them via the iQue Depot, but in 2009, Nintendo released Fugue Online to download games at home. The latest game for the console was released in 2006.

Discontinuation

On October 31, 2016, iQue reported that Fugue Online service will be discontinued by the end of December 2016.[6]

Games

The iQue Player's library has 14 games. All these games were released for the Nintendo 64 in North America, Japan, and other regions prior to the iQue Player. One game was cancelled.

Original title	Simplified Chinese title	Pinyin	Release date	Game code
Wave Race 64	水上摩托	*Shuǐ Shàng Mótuō*	November 17, 2003	51011[7]
Star Fox 64[games note 1]	星际火狐	*Xīngjì Huǒhú*	November 17, 2003	41011[8]
Dr. Mario 64[games note 2]	马力欧医生	*Mǎlìōu Yīshēng*	November 17, 2003	61011[9]
Super Mario 64[games note 1]	神游马力欧	*Shén Yóu Mǎlìōu*	November 17, 2003	10011[10]
The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time[games note 1]	塞尔达传说 时光之笛	*Sàiěrdá Chuánshuō: Shíguāng zhī Dí*	November 17, 2003	21011[11]
Mario Kart 64	马力欧卡丁车	*Mǎlìōu Kǎdīngchē*	December 25, 2003	52011[12]
F-Zero X	F-Zero X 未来赛车	*F-Zero X Wèilái Sàichē*	February 25, 2004	52021[13]
Yoshi's Story	耀西故事	*Yàoxī Gùshì*	March 25, 2004	11021[14]
Paper Mario	纸片马力欧	*Zhǐpiàn Mǎlìōu*	June 8, 2004	21021[15]
Sin and Punishment	罪与罚-地球的继承者-	*Zuì yǔ Fá: Dìqiú de Jìchéng Zhě*	September 25, 2004	41021[16]
Excitebike 64	越野摩托	*Yuèyě Mótuō*	June 15, 2005[17]	51021[18]
Super Smash Bros.	任天堂明星大乱斗	*Rèntiāntáng Míngxīng Dà Luàn Dǒu*	November 15, 2005	12021[19]
Custom Robo	组合机器人	*Zǔhé Jīqìrén*	May 1, 2006	21051[20]
Animal Crossing	动物森林	*Dòngwù Sēnlín*	June 1, 2006[21]	21041[22]

1. A demo was included with the system.
2. The full version of the game was included with the memory card bundled with the system.

Differences

iQue Player games differ slightly from their Nintendo 64 counterparts, with the text and voices having been translated to Chinese. The only exceptions are the *Mario* games and the previously Japan-only title *Sin and Punishment*, where the text has been translated while the voices remain in English. Also, the iQue games are newer than the Nintendo 64 counterparts, so many glitches and errors from the original games have been fixed. Some features were removed due to the system's lack of support for Nintendo 64 controller accessories like the Rumble Pak. Due to this, many games that originally supported the rumble feature no longer support it. Some features were added. Many games that allow the player to enter their name now have the option to use their iQue Player's username, which can be set at the iQue Player's main menu. Speedruns of *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time* have often been carried out on the iQue Player, because it has quicker loading times and faster scrolling text than the Nintendo 64 version.[23] Also other games such as *Star Fox 64* are known in the speedrunning community to be advantageous on the iQue, saving up to several minutes in faster loading times and reduced lag.

Nintendo had plans to support network multiplayer in games that originally only supported local multiplayer, which would work in a similar manner to that of an emulator.[24]

See also

- Video gaming in the People's Republic of China

References

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External links

- iQue Player website (in Chinese)
- Fugue Online page (in Chinese)